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Message Text

SECRET

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73
ACTION EUR-10

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NEA-06 AF-04 NSC-07 NSCE-00

CIAE-00 INR-11 NSAE-00 RSC-01 L-02 PM-03 DODE-00

TRSE-00 MC-02 EB-03 PRS-01 SP-02 ACDA-10 DRC-01 /078 W
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R 151827Z JUL 74
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2110
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

S E C R E T LONDON 08862

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: MASS, PFOR, JO, UK, SF, RH
SUBJECT: POSSIBLE JORDANIAN ARMS SALES TO SOUTH AFRICA
FOR RHODESIA

SUMMARY: BRITISH ARE STILL NEGOTIATING WITH JORDAN OVER RESALE OF HAWKER HUNTERS AND OTHER MILITARY EQUIPMENT. THEY HAVE WARNED OF SERIOUS EMBARRASSMENT TO HMG WHICH WOULD RESULT FROM UNAUTHORIZED SALE RESULTING IN ARMS REACHING RHODESIA, AND HAVE PRIVATELY EXPRESSED TO US SOME UNHAPPINESS THAT USG HAS DECIDED NOT TO SUPPORT BRITISH PROTESTS. WE HAVE PROVIDED SOOTHING RATIONALE. END SUMMARY

1. FOREIGN OFFICE TOLD PRESS LAST WEEK THAT IT ACCEPTED JORDANIAN GOVERNMENT'S ASSURANCE NO CONTRACT HAS BEEN SIGNED FOR SALE OF HAWKER-SIDDELEY HUNTERS TO SOUTH AFRICA.

2. AS DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, THAT IS NOT END OF THE MAT-
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TER. FCO NEAR EAST AND NORTH AFRICA DEPT HEAD CRAIG IN-

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FORMS US (AND HIS DESK OFFICER CONFIRMS) THAT BRITISH ARE STILL WORRIED JORDANIANS MIGHT GO THROUGH WITH LUCRATIVE SALE, APPARENTLY USING A MIDDLEMAN, FOR THE HUNTERS NEEDED BY RHODESIA. BRITISH ALSO WONDER WHAT JORDANIANS MIGHT DO WITH CENTURION TANKS AND TIGER CAT MISSILES THEY WERE EARLIER THINKING OF SELLING TO CHILE. BRITISH ARE ONLY PARTLY ENCOURAGED BY FACT CHILEAN DEAL IS OFF, PERHAPS DUE TO BRITISH OBJECTIONS.

3. AS FCO OFFICIALS SEE IT, JORDAN HAS CLEAR CHOICE BETWEEN SHADY DEAL WHICH IS LUCRATIVE AND MORE LEGITIMATE DISPOSAL OF SURPLUS EQUIPMENT WHICH IS LESS LUCRATIVE. BRITISH SUGGESTION OF LEBANON AS BUYER WAS TURNED DOWN BY JORDANIANS, ON BASIS LEBANESE DO NOT NEED ANYTHING LIKE 31 AIRCRAFT JORDANIANS WANT TO SELL. BRITISH HAVE SUGGESTED REALISTIC PRICE BE SET FOR BUY-BACK BY MANUFACTURERS, AS ORIGINAL CONTRACT PROVIDES. JORDANIAN SUGGESTION THAT HIGH BUY-BACK PRICE BE SUBSIDIZED BY HMG IS UNACCEPTABLE TO BRITISH. BOTH SIDES ARE CASTING ABOUT FOR OTHER LEGITIMATE BUYER.

4. BRITISH HAVE MADE IT CLEAR TO JORDAN THAT SALE DESTINED FOR RHODESIA COULD CAUSE CONSIDERABLE FUROR IN BRITAIN AND BE VERY EMBARRASSING TO PRESENT GOVERNMENT. THEY SAY THEY WOULD TAKE VERY SERIOUS VIEW OF GOJ SALE AGAINST HMG WISHES.

5. FCO OFFICIALS HAVE EXPRESSED TO US SOME UNHAPPINESS THAT USG COULD NOT SEE ITS WAY TO SUPPORTING BRITISH WITH GOJ. WE HAVE TRIED TO SOOTHE THEM BY POINTING OUT THAT JORDAN PROBABLY VALUES BRITISH RELATIONSHIP SUFFICIENTLY TO HEED HMG WISHES ON MATTER OF THIS RELATIVE IMPORT.
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